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William S Van Allen 04/15/2002 10:57:40 AM From DB/Inbox: William S Van Allen

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TELEGRAM

April 12, 2002

To: USCSTATE WASHDC - IMMEDIATE
Action: INR
From: AMEMBASSY QUITO (QUITO 1367 - IMMEDIATE)
TAGS: PREL, OPRC, KIRC, KPAO, EC
Captions: None
Subject: MEDIA REACTION: VENEZUELAN CRISIS: QUITO
Ref: None

1. Summary: Although Chavez' withdrawal from the presidency of Venezuela is being widely covered by the Ecuadorian electronic media today, the news broke too late for the print press. The following editorial provides background for the reasons that will likely produce widespread support in Ecuador for Chavez' removal. End Summary.

2. "Political Crisis in Venezuela," an editorial (04/11) in Quito's center-left (influential) "Hoy" (circ. 25,000)

Quote: "The national strike called by the Workers Confederation of Venezuela, with the support of businessmen from the Federation of Chambers, resulted yesterday in a situation of extreme violence that threatened the already weakened democratic institutions in Venezuela.

"The death of ten people, the closing of private TV channels and the governmental repression of the president's opponents, made the confrontation even worse, inflamed animosity and strengthened the calls for an indefinite strike in order to force the departure of the president.

"Chavez's authoritarian character and his demagogic populism have not found concrete solutions for the country's problems, have opened too many domestic confrontational fronts and have stirred foreign distrust, even in neighboring Colombia when there were signals that he (Chavez) was providing safe havens for FARC guerrillas."

PALMER

Additional Addressees:
None

CC:
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